

REMARKS

This communication is in response to the Office Action dated January 8, 2008 and follows an Interview between Applicant's representatives, Chris Volkmann and Joe Kelly, and Examiner Iwarere conducted on April 8, 2008. During the Interview, independent claims 1, 10, and 17 were discussed. No specific agreement with respect to the claims was reached. Applicant thanks the Examiner for his time and consideration in conducting the Interview.

In the Office Action, claims 1-20 were pending and were rejected. With this Amendment, claims 1, 4, 6, 10, 12, and 17 are amended and claims 5, 8-9, and 18-20 are cancelled. Further, new claims 21-25 have been added. In view of the following, reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested.

First, Applicant would like to note that some of the amendments presented herein have been made to correct antecedent basis issues. For instance, dependent claim 4 has been amended to change the language "wherein the web-based forms contain..." to "wherein the form is a web-based form that contains..." Independent claim 1, from which claim 4 depends, recites "a form." Further, the language "a window of the Internet browser" in claim 12 has been changed to "a window of the browser." Independent claim 10, from which claim 12 depends, recites "a browser." These amendments have been made for antecedent basis reasons and reasons of clarity, and have not been made based on any prior art.

Claim Objections

The Office Action first reports that claims 1, 10, and 17 were objected to because of informalities. In particular, the Office Action asserted that the term "API" should be spelled out at the first occurrence. Applicant respectfully submits that the term "API" is clearly described in Applicant's original Specification as an "application program interface." Nevertheless, Applicant has amended claims 1, 10, and 17 to recite "application program interface (API)." Applicant submits that this amendment does not change the scope of the claims and does not require a new search. Withdrawal of the claim objections is respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 5, 6, and 9 were rejected as not complying with the requirements of 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph. In particular, the Office Action asserted that claims 5, 6, and 9 contain trademark/trade names. Herewith, Applicant has cancelled claims 5 and 9 and has amended claim 6 to remove the language “.NET”. Applicant respectfully requests that the claim rejections under section 112, second paragraph, be withdrawn.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 102 and § 103

Claims 1, 2 and 4-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Crawshaw et al. (U.S. Publ. No. 2001/0042032, hereinafter “Crawshaw”). Further, claim 3 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Crawshaw in view of Lesk (U.S. Pat. No. 7,249,073). Claims 5, 8-9, and 18-20 have been cancelled rendering the rejection of these claims moot.

Crawshaw discloses a system for capturing and processing data in a server environment. As illustrated in FIG. 1A, computers 80 are connected to a web server 50 via internet 90. The user interacts with a computer 80 to enter data, which is provided through the web server 50 to an application server 30 for processing of the data. As illustrated in FIG. 1A, the application server 30 includes special purpose software 60 that provides application programs within the application server 30 for communicating in the server environment, storing and receiving data, creating and administering accounts, etc. (see paragraphs [0013], [0044]). Further, as illustrated in FIG. 2 of Crawshaw, a web browser 110 provides web pages or forms that are rendered on the user's computer 80 by the user's web browser 110 (see paragraph [0049]). The web pages are provided to the web browser 110 based on user interaction with the web pages. When data is submitted by the user through the web server, the application server 30, which runs the special purpose software, processes the user-submitted data (see paragraph [0050]). As described in paragraph [0050] of Crawshaw, within the application layer 130 (i.e., application server 30) an event loop 132 and session management 134 carry out the data processing functionality. The business objects 138 reside in the application layer 130 on application server 30 to process the data. In this manner, the business objects provide ad hoc

data processing within the application server 30 and define and invoke the functions to be performed for each set of data received at the application server. Paragraph [0052] of Crawshaw discusses business object 138 manipulation of data into the database layer.

In contrast to Crawshaw, aspects of concepts described in the present specification provide forms containing calls to a services API for processing data in the form. For instance, in one embodiment described on page 3, lines 5-19 of the present specification, a form can include data fields for user data entry, an object adapted to submit the web form when completed by the user, and embedded server controls adapted to invoke business rules upon submission by the user. Submitted forms are processed using a services API according to the invoked business rules. In another instance described in the present specification on page 12, line 27 – page 13, line 10, a form can be configured to call a services API to implement and sequence business rules to process data in the form. Using embedded calls to an API to process form data provides added flexibility. This is in contrast to ad hoc data processing of forms using special purpose software residing within an application layer, such as that disclosed in Crawshaw (see also, Applicant's specification page 1, line 3 – page 2, line 20).

With respect to independent claim 1, a system for capturing cost information over a network and for processing the information into a project accounting system is provided. Claim 1 recites a form accessible over a network by a user via a browser. The form includes fields for data entry by the user, a button for electronic submission of the form, and embedded calls in the form. A services application program interface (API) is adapted to invoke transactions with the project accounting system for processing data contained within the submitted form. As claimed, the embedded calls in the form comprise calls to the services API to invoke business rules for processing the data contained within the submitted form.

As discussed during the interview and described above, Crawshaw discloses an application server having business object functionality for ad hoc processing of data and does not teach or suggest a form having embedded calls for invoking business rules for processing data in the form. Applicant notes that paragraph [0017] of Crawshaw, cited in the Office Action, does not teach or suggest this feature of claim 1. Page 4 of the Office Action alleges that this section

of Crawshaw discloses a services API as claimed. However, it is noted that paragraph [0017] simply states that the server includes an application programmer interface that specifies protocol and format for data imported from another software application. The application programmer interface provides protocol and format for data from another software application that is "not provided on the server nor included as part of the special purpose software." Thus, it can clearly be seen that the application programmer interface disclosed in Crawshaw relates to an interaction with another software application and is not a services API adapted to invoke transactions where a submitted form contains embedded calls to the API to invoke business rules as claimed.

For at least these reasons, it is respectfully submitted that independent claim 1 is neither taught nor suggested by Crawshaw and is in allowable form.

With regard to independent claim 10, a method is provided and includes hosting forms on a server. As claimed, each form includes data fields for user data entry, an object for submitting the form when completed by the user, and embedded server controls for invoking business rules upon submission by the user. The business rules are written in managed code. Claim 10 also includes processing submitted forms with a services API according to the invoked business rules. The services API associates data contained in the submitted forms with entities in the accounting database.

As similarly discussed above, Crawshaw discloses a system for capturing and processing data in a server environment including an application server having business objects for ad hoc processing of data. Crawshaw does not disclose embedded controls in a form for invoking business rules for processing data in the form. For instance, the cited sections of Crawshaw (i.e., para [0055], [0082] and [0039]) do not disclose these features. Instead, paragraph [0055] of Crawshaw discusses navigational links providing user access to functionality provided by special purpose software 60 in the application server 30. For instance, the navigational links provide user navigation to various reports, and permits a user to view and edit data. As stated in Crawshaw, user-selection of the links causes server 30 to invoke programs and store and retrieve data. Although this section of Crawshaw discussed allowing an authorized user to enter and view data, it does not teach or suggest objects or embedded server controls in a

form as claimed. As discussed during the interview and described above, Crawshaw discloses ad hoc processing of data in the application server using special purpose software.

Further, paragraph [0082] of Crawshaw relates to an off-line version of time sheets enabling user time data to be provided via a web site. This section of Crawshaw simply states that data is entered using off-line time sheet functionality and also does not teach or suggest a form including an object adapted to submit the form and embedded server controls as claimed. Further, paragraph [0039] of Crawshaw relates to a web server providing a predetermined URL (a web site) for user access. As disclosed, the web server facilitates bi-directional communication between the users and the application server 30 and to allow a user's browser to access a desired web page through the web server. This section of Crawshaw also does not teach or suggest a form including an object adapted to submit the form and embedded server controls as claimed.

For at least these reasons, it is respectfully submitted that independent claim 10 is neither taught nor suggested by Crawshaw and is in allowable form.

Independent claim 17, as amended, provides a system for capturing time and expense information over a network and for processing the information into an accounting system. The system includes an accounting system, a plurality of web part forms adapted for user input, and a services API for implementing and sequencing business rules written in managed code to process the user input into the accounting system. The web part forms contain calls to the services API to invoke transactions with the accounting system to process the user input into the accounting system. The business rules define steps for invoking an approval process for the user input in the accounting system.

In contrast, Crawshaw discloses a system for capturing and processing data in a server environment. Data is submitted by users at computers 80 to an application server 30. As described in paragraph [0050] of Crawshaw, within the application layer 130, an event loop 132 and session management 134 carry out the data processing functionality. The business objects 138 reside in the application layer 130 on application server 30 and provide ad hoc data processing of data. While Crawshaw may mention "forms", discuss navigation links providing

user navigation, and permitting a user to view and edit data, nowhere does Crawshaw teach or suggest a form containing calls to a services API to implement and sequence the business rules to process the user input as claimed.

Further, independent claim 17 has been amended to recite a server adapted to host the plurality of web part forms containing calls to the services API and to serve the web part forms containing calls to users on request, to further distinguish the system of claim 17. In Crawshaw, data entered in a form rendered on the user's computer is sent to the application server for processing. The data is processed in the application server using the special purpose software and objects defined in the application server. The forms provided by the system of Crawshaw do not contain calls to a services API as claimed.

For at least these reasons, it is respectfully submitted that independent claim 17 is neither taught nor suggested by Crawshaw and is in allowable form.

Further, it is submitted that related dependent claims 2-4, 6-7, 11-16, and 21-25 are also in allowable form at least based on their relation to independent claims 1, 10, and 17, discussed above. Additionally, it is believed that at least some of these dependent claims recite features that are also neither taught nor suggested by Crawshaw. For example, dependent claim 23 recites "wherein the web part forms contain embedded server controls for calling the services API." Crawshaw discloses providing form functionality on a user's computer and receiving data from the user's computer at the application server. The received data is processed using the special purposes software. Nowhere does Crawshaw disclose embedded server controls contained in a form.

Dependent claim 24 recites "wherein the calls contained in the web part forms comprise embedded calls to the services API using remoting." Further, dependent claim 25 recites "wherein the calls contained in the web part forms comprise embedded calls to the services API using Web services." As similarly discussed above, Crawshaw discloses providing form functionality on a user's computer and submitting data from the user's computer to an application server, but does not teach or suggest embedded calls contained in a web part form.

Further, Crawshaw also does not teach or suggest such calls to a services API using remoting or Web services.

It is noted that these are examples of dependent claims that are believed to be independently patentable.


Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that all pending claims, namely claims 1-4, 6-7, 10-17, and 21-25, are in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested.

The Director is authorized to charge any fee deficiency required by this paper or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 23-1123.

Respectfully submitted,

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